



SLACC-*tt* Complaints Policy(Charity numbers 1139474 and CIO 1202875)

Date created	Last review	Agreed	Next review
April 2021	August 2023	October 2023	August 2025

Introduction

SLACC-*tt* views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person or organisation that has made the complaint.

Our policy is:

- to provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
- to publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint
- to make sure everyone at SLACC knows what to do if a complaint is received
- to make sure that complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way
- to make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
- to gather information which helps us to improve what we do.

Definition of a complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction about any aspect of SLACC's activity resulting from failure to meet the individual's expectations. This may include reference to SLACC's code of conduct or other standards such as Health and Safety.

Confidentiality

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements. Information regarding complaints

is held on our Complaints Register. This is held securely in our digital storage account. The data is encrypted and is accessible only to trustees.

Complaints Handling Procedure

How you can make a complaint:

We want to make it easy for you to contact us and to provide feedback or make a complaint. These are the ways you can get in touch with us:

1. Face to face: if you are dealing with a volunteer or contracted worker and you wish to complain, then please speak to them directly if you feel comfortable in doing so. If not please report to the activity lead. It may be possible to resolve the issue immediately. However, if that is not possible, then he/she will record the details of your complaint and will send it to the appropriate person.

2. You can email us on slaclimatechange@googlemail.com

In all instances where a complaint is made using the above means, we will contact you within 48 hours of receiving the complaint. If you provide us with a telephone number and/or email address we will contact you by either of those means to discuss the matter further and to officially record all necessary details. We hope to resolve the matter immediately.

Resolving complaints

Our commitment to you is to address each complaint in a sensitive, fair, transparent, equitable, professional and unbiased manner through the complaints handling process.

We will operate at all times from the premise that any person is entitled to express his or her views on our activity and that those views should be taken seriously where this is warranted. We will not, however, tolerate any abusive or discriminatory language or behaviour towards any of our contracted personnel, volunteers or Trustees, and may decline to investigate a complaint further in such circumstances. (Reference our Code of Conduct and Incident Response Pathway).

Our complaints procedure:

Stage 1

In many cases a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate.

Stage 2

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage 1, they can request that the complaint is reviewed by the trustee responsible for that area. The trustee will:

- Note down the relationship of the complainant to SLACC.
- If the complaint relates to a specific person, inform them and give them an opportunity to respond.
- Take all necessary steps to investigate the matter.
- Contact the complainant again in writing within 15 working days of receiving the complaint to advise of our findings or to give an update on progress.
- Continue to keep the complainant informed until the matter is resolved to their satisfaction or until all appropriate steps (in SLACC's reasonable opinion) to resolve the matter have been taken.

Record the complaint in our Complaints Register. **The trustee then reports all complaints at the next trustee meeting, under 'Governance'.**

Stage 3

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage 2, they can request that the complaint is reviewed by the trustees as a group. The person who receives a complaint will pass the complaint information to the chair of trustees within five working days. On receiving the complaint, the trustees may investigate the facts of the case themselves or identify a suitably senior person to do so.

Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within five working days. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a **written** reply. A copy of this complaints procedure should be attached. Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within 15 working days. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

The reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and (subject to the terms of our Privacy Policy) any action taken as a result of the complaint. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint at Stages 1 and 2.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond. Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within a month. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given. Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint. The decision taken at this stage is final, unless the trustees decide it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

External Stage

As SLACC is a registered charity, the complainant can complain to the Charity Commission Regulator at any stage. Information about the kind of complaints the Charity Commission can involve itself in can be found on their website at: <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity>.

Review of this Policy and Complaints Received

This policy will be reviewed by the trustees every 2 years. All complaints received will be available to the trustees.

Variation of the Complaints Procedure

The trustees may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about a Chair or trustee should not also have the Chair and/or trustee involved as a person leading a Stage 2/3 review.

Link to external conflict resolution approach:

<https://haltensoriorcohousing.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Final-Conflict-Resolution-Policy-1.pdf>